THE VOICE

February 2016 Edition

Contents:

Late Breaking News…

(Came in after I started printing).
The Dedication Service at the MIA plaque at the Altona RSL will be held on Wednesday 17 February at 11am. Lunch afterwards at the RSL. All Welcome. For details call George Coleman on 9398 2363.

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Editor's Opening

Well, 2015 has come and gone and so has the KVAA Christmas luncheon. In fact, this event came and went over two months ago, but such is the publication schedule of *The Voice* that I can only now report on it. A few people remarked that there seemed to be more attendees than last year but, alas, this is untrue. The venue was smaller, which gave the impression of greater numbers. Looking over the tables on the day I immediately noticed the absence due to illness or other commitments of such Christmas luncheon stalwarts such as Alan McDonald, John Duson, Leo Gleeson, Don Scally, Milton Hoe, and the two Bernies, Schultz and Shrubsole.

Other absences… No *Swing Masters* because, as evident to all present, there wasn't enough room there to swing a cat, much less a master. Santa was busy elsewhere, as was the world's tallest gnome. They did, however, provide a supply of lollies for each table, so their absence was not without compensation.

For those who could and did, thank you for attending, and a special thanks to Claire Kwon, daughter of General Kwon Young Hae, and to Consul-General, Hongju Jo. While I think of it, congratulations to Robert Grant and John Moller who received the Peace Medal from the Consul-General.

The 155 photos taken on the day, some of which are actually in focus, are on the website. What's the web address? Glad you asked. It is on page 2, but for those too lazy to turn to that page it's: www.kvaa.org.au

Consul-General Hongju Jo and Vic Dey enjoying the *Punnies* section of a draft copy of December's *Voice* at the Xmas luncheon.

Jack Weston (dubious), Alan Evered (selling confidently) and Gerry Steacy (watching anxiously) at the Christmas luncheon.

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President's Report

Vic Dey, National President, KVAA Inc.

I hope everyone is feeling refreshed and recharged and, even more important, is in good health after the Christmas and New Year break. But, before dealing with 2016 I have a little business from the tail end of last year.

On 14 December, I and other veterans attended the Fountain Gate SC presentation evening at which students from years 7 through to 11 were presented with academic (improvement, subject and excellence) and sporting awards. The 2015 college dux and 2016 school captains were also announced. Congratulations to all the students concerned.

On January 18th, we had lunch with the Consul-General and his Project Manager, Ms Heesun Chang. He gave us a Certificate of Incorporation for the proposed Melbourne Korean War Memorial Committee Inc. This Committee will come together to raise funds (get plans, permission, etc.) to build a Korean War memorial here in Melbourne.

The Shrine of Remembrance and its surrounds are, and hopefully always will be, a sacred place to visit and pay respects to loved ones. Add a Korean War Memorial of our own here in Melbourne, hopefully as near The Shrine as possible. Unbelievable. I hope that we can all work together on this fantastic project and bring it to fruition.

I think we consider too much the luck of the early bird and not enough the bad luck of the early worm.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

They Were Home
by Des Guilfoyle
3400632, 1RAR & 2RAR, 6 August 1952 – 8 August 1953

The soldiers in the American Civil War called them 'bombproofs.' The ANZACs on Gallipoli and the Western Front had them but no name seems to have emerged. World War II, being more mobile, did without them and in the Korean War we called them hootchies.

I refer of course to those underground, or partially underground and sandbagged structures that served as living quarters and were a feature of static trench warfare. They all had the same features...and were neither weather proof, bombproof, rat proof or any proof; however, they did afford some protection from shellfire and the weather.

My introduction to this form of architecture was in August 1952 when I arrived in Korea. The war which had started in June 1950, after an initial mobile phase, had settled down to dreary trench warfare by November 1951. As the war ground on, each unit that occupied a sector of the front line established a trench system and fortifications. Each unit that followed improved these earthworks but little thought or time was given to the comfort or protection of the troops.

Our hootchies (the name probably derived from 'Ochie', Japanese for the inside of a house or room) were built in that rare commodity afforded our soldiers – spare time, and out of anything that could be scrounged. As a result they were flimsy, damp and dangerous in as much they would not stand a direct hit and could, and in one case did, collapse and kill an occupant, and also cold, damp and often crowded. The log construction meant they were a ready built refuge for rats that occupied the front line positions in plague proportions.

These obnoxious creatures carried lice that it turn carried haemorrhagic fever, an often fatal disease. The Army however provided abundant literature on how to avoid this complaint, but to my knowledge never provided any rat poison or fumigants to get rid of the primary source. We improvised by burning cordite or kerosene, the fumes of which often affected the human occupants as much as the rats.

Another example of the blinkered thinking of the army high brass was to have our hootchies inspected by some high-ranking colonel blimp, obviously dredged out of a rear echelon billet. The result was that almost all were classed as unsafe and not to be used. No thought, however, was given to any alternative shelter, and of course, we continued to live in them. The risk from the hootchies was minuscule compared to the many and varied dangers that were an every day occurrence. Good, bad or indifferent, they were our home.

Another interesting feature about hootchies became apparent after I had spent some time in Korea. The further from the front line, the better the hootchie. Strong, substantial structures built without the inconvenience of enemy observation or shell fire by troops occupying safe rear echelons, in direct contrast to the flimsy efforts scratched up by tired troops at the front. Another case of the right structure in the wrong place.

Our government, mindful of the bitter winter cold, provided us with excellent winter clothing but no heating was ever provided for the crude shelters. Accordingly, with the ingenuity that is characteristic of the Aussie soldier, we improvised 'choofers' – crude stoves made out of discarded petrol tins. The fuel, diesel, dripped from a pipe into the hot tin, and the droplets ignited with 'choof.' Hence the name.

They were notoriously unreliable, liable to explode and were the cause of many burn casualties. The government did not provide sufficient fuel, so the short fall was made up with all sorts of scrounged supplied including, sometimes, high octane petrol. An unintended by-product of the choofers was that the black smoke they emitted often made us look like the Kentucky Minstrels. I have no doubt this also contributed to the breathing problems so many veterans suffer today.

It must have finally dawned on the Army high brass or the politicians - perhaps the many reports forwarded by our commanders after being noted, discussed, and filed, finally came to light - for some effort was eventually made to provide adequate, bomb proof and weather proof and therefore relatively comfortable quarters. Accordingly teams of Korean labourers under the supervision of Army engineers, descended on the front line positions and soon established new hootchies.

They had solid timber supports, overhead cover, were reasonably spacious and well ventilated. Unfortunately, most of them were built just before the ceasefire. In fact one of our last tasks before pulling back from our positions in accordance with the terms of the cease fire was to demolish and salvage the material from these new structures!

Like everything else from the Government…too little or too late!

Cross Confusion

Q: How many persons earned the Victoria Cross during World War One?

A: The answer isn't a straightforward as you might think, since the question refers to "persons" receiving the VC, rather than the number of VCs actually awarded. The actual number of decorations issued was 635, including one to the American "Unknown Soldier." However, a couple of the awardees received more than one VC, some were issued for duty in non-WWI related colonial ventures, and several were awarded collectively to the crew of a ship or the troops in a unit, although actually only worn by one man, elected by his comrades for the honour. Consequently, the number of individual awardees could be as low as 622. It depends on how you calculate these things.

Source: *Strategy & Tactics* magazine No. 141 March 1991

They're Tanks, Thanks.

Q: Why is a tank called a tank?

A: We are so used to the idea that an armoured military vehicle is called a 'tank' that we rarely stop to think that it is not an immediately obvious name for it to be given. The name goes back to experimentation in fighting vehicles during the First World War. During the construction of prototype armoured cars intended to break the deadlock in trench warfare, it was necessary to keep secret and conceal their existence from potential German spies. They were therefore described in documents at the time as "mobile water tanks for Mesopotamia" (modern Iraq). By the time they were deployed in the later stages of the battle of the Somme, the name had stuck.

Source: *BBC History* magazine, July 2009

*   *   *   *   *

I hope you are enjoying this copy of *The Voice* and you continue to do so with subsequent editions – assuming you have renewed your subscription. Oh, what's that? You haven't. That's OK. There are many reason why you may have forgotten. So here is your second chance…

- cut here -

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Note: In this article Neil D. Macmillan is written as Neil McMillan and M. D. Macmillan, and Philip H. Hancox as J. Hancox. According to the Korean War Nominal role the correct spellings are Neil Macmillan and P. Hancox.

Rescue From Behind Enemy Lines
by Lieutenant G. C. "Taffy" Hughes DSM, RAN

(G. C. Hughes was a member of the Carrier Air Group on *HMAS Sydney* at the time of the rescue.)

Dick Babbit was one of the pilots who flew a US Navy helicopter embarked for Search and Rescue duties from Commonwealth carriers operating on the West Coast of Korea during the Korean War. He flew a number of rescue missions during his time with the RAN carrier, and with his outgoing personality, he earned both the respect and admiration of RAN personnel on the ship and, in particular, the aviators who flew over Korea. Of the several rescues of downed airmen that Chief Babbit and his crewman carried out, one flight in particular stands out.

On the afternoon of October 26, 1952, an RAN Firefly aircraft, piloted by Sub Lieutenant Neil McMillan and navigated by OBS 1 Philip Hancox, was shot down after a bombing run on a railway tunnel. The pilot and observer were not seriously hurt in the crash landing and took refuge from North Korean soldiers in a nearby ditch. Sea Fury fighter aircraft from *HMAS Sydney* flew cover over the downed airmen whilst North Korean soldiers endeavoured to capture them. The story of the rescue was told with a sketch by the London Illustrated News, and reprinted as follows:

"During a strike of Firefly reconnaissance bombers from *HMAS Sydney* north of the Han River, one aircraft was brought down 60 miles behind the enemy lines. The pilot, Sub-Lieutenant M.D. Macmillan, RAN, and Observer 1st Class J. Hancox were unhurt, but forced by enemy fire into a ditch.

The remainder of the flight, aided by Fury fighters, made straffing runs over the spot: the parent ship was informed and an appeal sent to the USAF shore-based rescue helicopter (on loan from the USN) made ready. Helicopters are unarmed, and the aircrew (Airman G. C. Gooding, USN) was quickly briefed on how to use an Australian Owen sub-machine gun. The distance was 100 miles and the slow speed of the helicopter made it hardly likely it could return in daylight, and helicopters do not, as a rule, operate in the dark.

At 16.22 it set off, piloted by CPO A. K. Babbit, USN.

Communists had been held off the downed airmen by aircraft, and when the Air Group Commander swooped to drop a message, his aircraft was hit. All Sydney's aircraft were recalled, save two Furies and two escorts for the shore-based helicopter, which, however, was ordered back to its control at 17.00 and was passed by Sydney's helicopter, which at 17.15 met the Furies, who had broken off to escort.

At 17.33 three minutes after the previously indicated time, the helicopter joined the downed men at 4000 ft. As it came down the aircrew was ready with his Oven gun and the Furies, 18 minutes past their safety limit of time, sprayed the area With bullets. Protected by fire, Sub-Lieutenant Macmillan and his Observer crawled from the ditch, the machine came down and in a minute all were aboard. Airman C. D. Gooding put two enemy soldiers out of action, the helicopter shot up, and the return journey was safely accomplished."

The rescue flight was a hazardous one for many reasons; fuel carried was marginal for the distance to be flown, opposition from the North Koreans against a virtually unarmed helicopter, and daylight hours were running out and the helicopter was not fitted with night-flying instruments. During the flight a recall message was sent from the ship; however this was not heard by the helicopter pilot. After the rescue Chief Babbit was unable to return to *HMAS Sydney* and made for an airfield in South Korea where he landed with the assistance of truck headlight.

Dick Babbit was awarded the United States Navy Cross and the British Distinguished Service Medal for has service in the Korean war. He retired from the United States Navy in 1966 but continued flying fixed wing and rotary wing aircraft in such diverse areas as Alaska and Ethiopia. During his flying careers, he aggregated over 16000 flying hours and was himself twice rescued having ditched into the sea through aircraft malfunctions.

Source: *Navy News* February 22 1980

The Importance of Malta 1940-43

by Albert A. Nofi

In the very center of the Mediterranean lies the island of Malta. During World War II Malta was a British possession. Lying athwart the principle Axis supply lines to Africa, Malta proved the most serious thorn in the side of the Axis convoys. From Malta, British aircraft and naval forces could intercept convoys to Africa and wreak serious damage, while reconnaissance aircraft could keep track of Italian naval movements, Of course, Britain paid a price for possession of Malta. The fortress-island suffered roughly two air raids daily for the duration of the Mediterranean struggle. In addition it suffered the privations of siege. Attempts to supply the island with special fast moving heavily escorted convoys often proved incredibly expensive, if not occasionally impossible, in the face of Axis air power and Italian light naval forces. But the price was paid, and willingly paid. For the service rendered by Malta was incalculable. During the most critical portion of the fighting in North Africa. from July through December of 1942, Malta claimed fully 35% of Axis supplies with her aircraft and surface craft.

Repeatedly, both Italian and German naval experts recommended that the island be assaulted and taken. But, Hitler, mindful of the destruction of airborne forces in the Crete Operation, demurred, supported by his Russian front generals. Finally, however, Mussolini was won over to the project and he convinced Hitler of its merits. Hitler transferred a German air corps to Sicily in anticipation of an assault. The result was that in the first six months of 1942 barely 6% of Axis supplies failed to arrive in Africa. This was due largely to the presence of overwhelming Axis air power in Central Mediterranean, which bombed Malta almost to destruction.

But then, in May of 1942 Rommel "borrowed" the German air corps for a limited operation in Libya. designed to clear the Gazala line, take Tobruk and throw the British back into Egypt. Of course, he continued on to Alamein and never released the aircraft. The assault on Malta, scheduled for July of 1942 was called off. The elite German and Italian paratroopers who were to spearhead the attack eventually turned up as infantry on the Alamein line. And, with the pressure off, Malta began to erode Axis convoys again.

Thus, in the final analysis, it was sea power which shaped the course of the fighting in the desert. And it is not stretching things overmuch to say that it was Malta which shaped the course of the struggle for the Mediterranean. In the end, the Allies understood the value of Malta and willingly paid every price to retain control. The Axis, essentialy land-bound, failed to fully appreciate the importance of the island and frittered away their best chance of seizing it.

Source: *Strategy & Tactics* magazine, No. 40

The Italian Malta

Just to the south of Sicily in the straits between that island and Tunisia lies the island of Pantelleria. In 1943, it had a reputation as the "Gibraltar of the Central Mediterranean." Some five miles by eight miles across, Pantelleria, population 24,000, was held by about 5,000 Italian infantry, perhaps 5,000 artillery and air force personnel, and 1,000 German troops. Most of the Italian troops were militia. The island was moderately well supplied with anti-aircraft and coast defence guns, but stocks of food, ammunition, and especially water were limited.

The British had thought about taking Pantelleria as early as 1942. Axis air superiority in the central Mediterranean at the time prohibited such an operation. However, as plans for a disembarkation in Sicily developed, the old British proposals for Pantelleria were revived. Operations against the island commenced on 18 May 1943, and over the next few days an average of 100 medium and fighter bombers sorties were flown against it every day. B-17 raids began on 6 June, with intensified, round-the-clock raids by lighter aircraft as well. As the Royal Navy made several firings against the island, culminating in one on 8 June by five cruisers, eight destroyers, and several smaller vessels, the bombing raids intensified. On 10 June, 1,571 tons were dropped – the greatest pressure Malta ever endured was some 2,200 tons in one month!

By this time the defences were fairly demolished. Most coastal batteries were smashed to pieces, virtually all anti-aircraft batteries destroyed, save those in the interior. More seriously, the principal water supply, a rain-collecting system, had been badly damaged. The Italian commander decided to surrender – the Germans had lit out by motor torpedo boat several days earlier. As elements of the British 1st Infantry Division made their final approach toward the narrow beach in landing craft under naval gunfire support, the surrender message went out. By noon on 11 June, Pantelleria was secured at the cost of one casualty. The island was soon converted into an important air base for fighter operations over Sicily.

Source: *Strategy & Tactics* magazine No. 89 Nov.-Dec. 1981

Your Body…

• Your heart pumps approximately 2000 gallons (7,571 litres) of blood through its chambers every single day. It beats more than 100,000 times a day.

• You take around 17,000 breaths a day on average, and don't have to think about a single one of them. Yet if you want to stop breathing temporarily, you can voluntarily hold your breath. A typical pair of adult lungs can hold a huge six litres of air.

• Every day your body ensures you don't contract cancer thousands of times over. Cancer is formed when cells are altered in a way which re-programs their DNA and it's estimated that tens of thousands of cells suffer cancer-causing lesions every day. But the body sends special enzymes scuttling around to inspect DNA strands for faults and fix them before they turn into tumours.

• Your brain doesn't stop working. It is estimated that about 50,000-60,000 thoughts pass through it each day on average. That is a whopping 35-48 thoughts every minute.

• The cells in your stomach lining produce an alkaline substance every few milliseconds to neutralize stomach acid. If they didn't, your stomach would digest itself as some of the acids are strong enough to dissolve metals.

• You blink about 28,800 times every day, with each one lasting just a tenth of a second. This is a voluntary reflex the body uses to keep the eyes clean and moist, which is pretty crucial given that 90% of the information you process is visual, and you can weigh up any visual scene in just 0.01 seconds. Consider how many people and objects you look at every day – it's remarkable!

• Most of the body's energy is expelled via heat. Your body produces the same heat as 25 light bulbs over the course of a single day.

• Red blood cells shoot around the body, taking less than 60 seconds to complete a full circuit. This means that each of yours makes 1,440 trips around your body every day, delivering oxygen. Each cell lives for about 40 days, before being replaced by a younger model. It's no surprise their life span is short. Having made 60,000 trips around the body, they must be exhausted!

• You shed more than 1 million skin cells every single day but they are constantly replenished automatically to save you from turning transparent and becoming rather exposed! Your skin is actually an organ; in fact it's the largest organ you have, with a surface area of 18 square feet (2 square metres).

• Your hair (if you still have any) grows about half a millimetre per day, and the average adult with a full scalp has around 100,000 hairs on their head. So that's a combined 50 meters of hair growth every, single day.

• The brain and mouth work together to allow us to speak an average of around 5000 words a day. Well that's if you're a woman, because studies suggest that men only speak 2000 words, yet both sexes utter 500-700 of real value (i.e. that get a job done, or provide useful information). Will the women out there have something to say about this suggestion?

• Your liver is so busy over the course of a day, It is almost impossible to summarize its activities. It manufactures cholesterol, vitamin D & blood plasma; it identifies the nutrients your body needs, and stores some away for future use; it filters 1.53 quarts (1.43 litres) of blood every minute and produces a quart (0.94 litres) of bile every day to help you break down your food. Basically, you have a factory plant running inside of you every day, which is pretty amazing!

• The glands in your mouth produce an incredible 1.5 litres of saliva every day. That's a lot of dribble! If this didn't happen, your mouth would dry up, become overrun with bacteria, and you wouldn't be able to digest your food.

• The average male's testicles manufacture ten million new sperm cells every day. Those that aren't used age and are eventually broken down inside the body, with any useful nutrients being absorbed and put to use.

• Each of your kidneys contains 1 million tiny filters that work together to filter an average of 2.2 pints (1.3 litres) of blood every minute – that's 3168 pints (1872 litres) every single day, despite each kidney only being the size of a fist. If that wasn't enough, they also expel an average of 2.5 pints (1.4 litres) of urine from your body every day too.

• Your body works over time to digest your food and the process starts before it even hits the mouth. When you smell food, your mouth automatically produces more saliva to prepare the digestive system for work. It takes about 6-8 hours for food to pass through the stomach and two days to complete the digestion process. The average person will eat over 50 tonnes of food in his or her lifetime, which seems ridiculous!

• And most amazing of all, your body cells are regenerating themselves every single day without any prompting. This means you have an entirely new set of taste buds every ten days, new nails every 6-10 months, new bones every ten years and even a new heart every 20 years.

Notices

Robert Chapman

Terry Dinneen from the 2RAR Association is looking for information on Robert Chapman, or more accurately, where he is buried. Born in Ayr, Ayrshire, Scotland in 1929, Private Chapman, 311077, served with 2RAR in Korea from 17 March 1953 to 6 April 1954 and passed away in 2009, probably in Victoria. If anyone knows anything about Robert Chapman in his latter years or where he is buried, contact Terry on 02 47544238 or at t.mdinneen@bigpond.com

Carer Gateway

Carer Gateway is a new website and phone service to help carers access practical information and resources to help them in their caring role. Carer Gateway provides information about the services and support available for people who care for someone with a disability, chronic illness, dementia, mental illness or who are frail aged. This new service will be available via www.carergateway.gov.au or by phone 1800 422 737 Monday to Friday, from 8.00am to 6.00pm local time in all states and territories. For any questions email carergateway@dss.gov.au

A Message From Bob Orrick…

I am seeking Australian Korean War veterans who might be interested in adding their stories or comments to my blog boborrick.ca or boborrick.com. The first one concerns the Korean War and my serious attempts to educate people that there was a Korean War and that 21 countries took part with 16 of those countries being combatants – Australia being one such country. Sadly, too few in the world understand the worth of the Korean War and its legacy or that even know about it. Education from Korean War veterans of each of the 21 countries is a must and a simple route to that end.

For those with email the address for response is *cys@eastlink.ca*, and for those without, contact the editor (see Page 2). *[Editor: Good luck, Bob. I've been trying for years to get something out of them]*

Passage to Pusan

PB Publishing is proud to announce the release of the epic new book *Passage to Pusan* by Australian journalist, Louise Evans. The book tells the true story of an Australian army mother's harrowing solo journey to Pusan to find the grave of her soldier son, Vincent, who died fighting in the Korean War. The book provides an intimate insight into Thelma's pain when she loses her first born and the impact that World War II and the subsequent Korean and Vietnam Wars have on her family of 10 children. Three of Thelma's four sons joined the army. Only one survived. Passage to Pusan is now on sale online and on Facebook. To purchase the book please visit the *Passage to Pusan* website at http://passagetopusan.com

Attention W.A. Veterans

To the 16 veterans who are members of the KVAA Inc. in W.A. (and more generally to others interstate) here is a message from Barbara Brown, the publicity officer for St. Stephen's Anglican Church in Forrestfield, Western Australia…

Each year, we hold an ANZAC Dawn service in the grounds of our church, not just for our parishioners but for the whole of the local community and last year, we had not only a Dawn Service but a display featuring those servicemen listed on our Honour Roll together with war stories such as the background of the Walers, the Dickin Award etc. Some of the men featured are still alive and attended the service and display.

We had over 100 people attend. Such was the success of this event that we were asked what would we be doing in 2016! Something we had not contemplated.

Since ANZAC Day 2015, we have had more men (no women at this stage) ask to be included on the Honour Roll – 1 from the Korean War, 2 from Vietnam, 1 for peace keeping in Cambodia and 1 who completed National Service – and we will feature each of these men (photo, unit number, date of service, etc.)

*Terry Bell is the only one from the Korean War, so as well as his profile I will be presenting some of the history of that conflict, such as the timeline of the various events. When researching this war, I noticed your Association and I wondered if we could include some information as to when you formed, **any stories you would be willing to share and anything else that you think would be of interest.***

If you are able to help me, it would be sincerely appreciated.

My contact details are: Mrs Barbara Brown, 17 Ridge Hill Road, Maida Vale, WA,6057. Telephone: (08) 9454 6007 or email: nivanbar1@bigpond.com

Thanks to Ron Joyce…

In the last edition of *The Voice* (December 2015 for those with short memories) I put in a request for the missing section of *Memories of an Assault Pioneer* by John Lewis, first published in three sections in the magazine (as *The Voice* was then before it 'slimmed down') way back in 2002. A big thank you and round of applause to member, Ronald H. Joyce of Western Australia, who not only sent me the missing section but the complete story which included the original photos and maps plus the account of the author's 1995 revisit to Korea.

Dangerous Waters

by Vic Jeffrey

Few people would be aware that at least 32 merchant ships and more than 400 men were lost to enemy aircraft, submarines and mines off the Australian coast during World War II, this tally not including ships damaged or successfully escaping after being attacked. Wartime security restricted the flow of this information and when the war ended this chapter in Australia's maritime history was virtually forgotten.

One successful wartime escape was that of the 9500 tonne coastal passenger ship and wartime troopship *Katoomba* when it was enroute from Fremantle to Adelaide on 4 August 1942. In approaching darkness at 7.10pm while the ship was 200 nautical miles south-south-east of Esperance, off the WA coast, a surfaced Japanese submarine shelled and chased the *Katoomba* for three hours before the liner's speed and return fire caused the enemy to break off.

Possibly the luckiest Australian merchant ship of the war was the 4250 tonne steamer *Barwon* enroute from Melbourne to Port Kembla on 4 June 1942. Just before dawn in a position 33 nautical miles south-south-east of Gabo Island, *Barwon* was attacked by gunfire and torpedo from a Japanese submarine, the torpedo actually exploding close alongside showering the decks with fragments. Fortunately, there were no casualties.

Luck was not confined to merchant ships, the torpedo which sank the *SS Iron Knight* in convoy on February 8, 1943, ran under the escorting corvette *HMAS Townsville*.

Some of the merchant ships lost to enemy action were:

British Motorist (British): Bombed by Japanese aircraft in Darwin Harbour on 19 February 1942 with the loss of two men.

Cambridge (British): sunk by mine off Wilson's Promontory in Bass Straight, on 7 November 1940 with the loss of one man, after striking a mine laid by the German raider *Pinquin*.

City of Rayville (USA): The first US ship lost in the war, she sank six miles south of Cape Otway in Bass Strait with the loss of one man, less than 24 hours after the sinking of the *Cambridge*, after hitting a mine laid by the *Pinquin*.

Coast Farmer (USA): Torpedoed by Japanese submarine I-11 some 15 nautical miles south of Jervis Bay on 20 July 1942, with the loss of one man.

Don Isidro (Philippines): Hit by Japanese dive bombers off Bathurst Island, set afire and drifted ashore with 11 of the 84 survivors dying on the beach.

Dyreenbee (Australian): Shelled by Japanese submarine I-175 off NSW coast on 3 August 1942. She drifted ashore north of Moruya Heads with three crew lost.

Fingal (Norwegian): Torpedoed on 5 May 1943 with the loss of 12 men by Japanese submarine I-180 off Nambucca Heads, NSW, while carrying military equipment to Darwin.

Florence D. (Philippines): Bombed by Japanese dive bombers whilst in company of the *Don Isidro* some 24 miles west of Bathurst Island in the Timor Sea on 19 February 1942.

George S. Livanos (Greek): Torpedoed by Japanese submarine I-11, 15 miles off Jervis Bay with no casualties on 20 July 1942.

Guatemala (Panamanian): Torpedoed by Japanese submarine I-21 40 miles north-east of Sydney off Cape Three Points.

Iron Chieftain (Australian): Torpedoed by Japanese submarine I-24, 27 miles east of Sydney enroute from Newcastle to Whyalla with a cargo of coke. Twelve men were lost.

Iron Crown (Australian): Torpedoed by Japanese submarine I-27 south of Gabo Island, Victoria, on 4 June 1942, enroute from Whyalla to Newcastle. Loaded with manganese, she sank in one minute with only five survivors from her crew of 42.

Iron Knight (Australian): Torpedoed by Japanese submarine I-21 some 21 miles from Montague Island, NSW, whilst in convoy in the early hours of 8 February 1943. She sank in two minutes with the loss of 36 men.

Kalingo (New Zealand): Torpedoed by Japanese submarine I-21, 110 miles east of Sydney on 18 January 1943 while enroute to New Plymouth, New Zealand, with the loss of two crewmen.

Koolama (Australian): One of the glamour ships on the Australian coast, this cargo-passenger ship was bombed

by a Japanese flying boat in Joseph Bonaparte Gulf in northern Australia on 20 February 1942 and beached. Refloated on 1 March, she reached Wyndham, WA, the next day and sank alongside the wharf during a raid on 3 March.

The corvette *HMAS Townsville* which had a Japanese torpedo run under her while escorting a coastal convoy.

Kowarra (Australian): Torpedoed 35 miles north-east of Sandy Cape, northern Queensland, by Japanese submarine I-26 with 21 crewmen lost and 11 survivors.

Limerick (British): Torpedoed by Japanese submarine 1-177 20 nautical miles south-east of Cape Byron enroute from Sydney to Brisbane while in a convoy of seven ships. Two crew members were lost with 70 survivors.

Lydia M Childs (USA): A Liberty Ship on her maiden voyage. She was torpedoed by Japanese submarine I-178 in a position 120 miles east of Newcastle. No casualties.

Macumba (British): Bombed by Japanese aircraft in Arafura Sea on 6 August 1943.

Mamutu (British): Sunk by gunfire by Japanese submarine RO.33 north of Cape York on 6 August 1942. Survivors were machine-gunned in the water, some escaping, but 11 Europeans and 103 natives were lost.

Mauna Loa (USA): Bombed by Japanese aircraft in Darwin Harbour on 19 February 1942. Two bombs broke her back. Three crew members were lost.

Meigs (USA): Bombed by Japanese aircraft in Darwin Harbour on 19 February 1942 with two crew members being lost. The 12,568 ton *SS Meigs* was the largest Allied merchant ship lost in Australian waters during WWII.

The *motor vessel Barwon* which survived a Japanese gunfire and torpedo attack.

Millimumul (Australian): A trawler which fouled and detonated a mine in her nets off the NSW coast on 26 March 1941 with seven men lost.

Neptuna (Australian): Blew-up after being bombed by Japanese aircraft in Darwin Harbour on 19 February 1942 with the loss of 45 crew members.

Nimbin (Australian). Coastal steamer mined off Port Stephens, NSW, with seven lives lost. The minefield had been laid by the German raider, *Pinquin*.

Storstad (Norwegian): Captured by the German raider *Pinquin* in October 1940 and renamed *Passat*.

Wollongbar (Australian): Torpedoed by Japanese submarine off Crescent Head on 29 April 1943.

Source: *Navy News Vol.35, No.10,* 5 June 1992. Article originally titled Enemy Sank Merchants. This is an edited version.

Memorial Update

The name "Melbourne Korean War Memorial Committee Incorporated" has now been registered Consumer Affairs Victoria. The stated purpose of the Association is, predictably, to establish a Korean War Memorial in Melbourne with contributions from Australian Korean War veterans, members of the Korean community and participating organisations on the site, approved and designated by the Victorian Government.

So far, so good. Now comes the next hurdle...forming a committee to help guide the project.

Positions on the committee are open to all level of membership (veteran, associated, special) and widows of veterans. The one caveat is living in or near, or within public transport or driving distance of, Melbourne. As an inducement to join, I believe all members of the committee have their names inscribed on a plaque on the memorial, so here's your chance to have your name memorialised forever (pun intended).

For an application form (which comes with a copy of a copy of the constitution and the the rules of the committee), contact KVAA Secretary, Alan Evered (details on Page 2).

> Memory is the treasury and guardian of all things – Cicero

HMAS Wort

by Ian Hughes

A series of cartoons which appeared in *Navy News* in the 1980s-2000s (now in public domain).

A reputation once broken may possibly be repaired, but the world will always keep their eyes on the spot where the crack was – Joseph Hall

What is Golf?

Golf is…

• The simplest looking game in the world when you decide to take it up and the toughest looking after you have been at it 10 or 12 years.

• What letter carrying, ditch digging and carpet beating would be if those three tasks had to be performed on The same hot afternoon by gentlemen dressed in sneakers and casual attire.

• Played on carefully selected grass with little white balls and as many clubs as the player can afford. These balls usually cost from 50 cents to $5 and it's possible to support a family for a month on the money represented by the balls lost by some golfers in one afternoon.

• Played on a course that has 18 holes, 17 of which are unnecessary when you get to the 18th. A "hole" is a tin cup in the centre of a "green" which is a small parcel of grass costing about $2.90 a blade.

• Simply trying to get the golf balls from a given point into each of the 18 cups in the fewest strokes and the greatest number of words. The ball must not be thrown, pushed or carried but must be propelled by about $1200 worth of curious looking implements especially designed to provoke the owner into a maniacal fury.

• Concluded after the final or 18th hole when the "golfer" adds up his score and stops when he is on the fringe of respectability, then he has a pint of gin, sings "fr'eez a jolly good fellah" with six or eight other liars, burglars and cheats and calls it the end of a perfect day.

Here's the view of *Navy News* cartoonist, Ian Hughes, in 1977…

"I enjoyed the rule book much better."

"Try speeding up your downswing."

"That's your trouble – you lack confidence."

"Look! We've been married an hour and you're nagging already!"
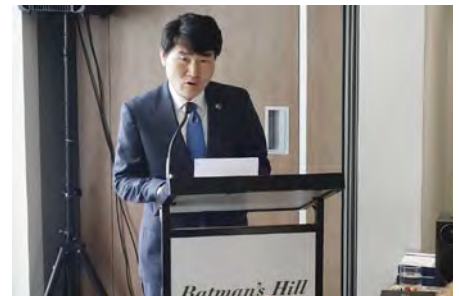

"You didn't HAVE to bring your caddy along!"

It's the only way to get him to do anything in the garden."

Luncheon Photographs

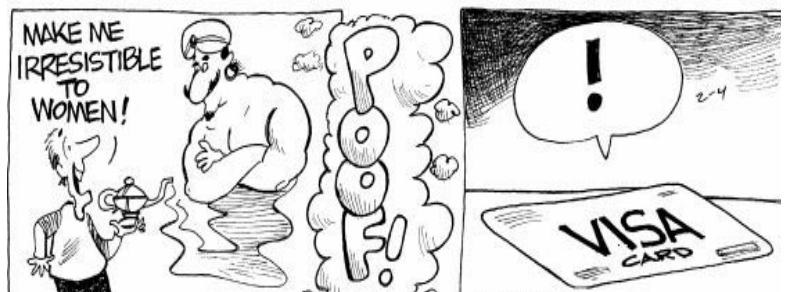KVAA Inc. Christmas Luncheon at Batman's Hill on Collins, 2 December 2015

Geelong Xmas Lunch Photos
The Gateway Hotel, Wednesday 9 December 2015

Korean Society Photos
Senior's Week Celebration, 16 Dec. '15

Farewells

Kenneth R. Beecham, 32758, 3RAR on 9 October 2015
Eric William Hayes, 3400362, 3RAR on 26 July 2015
Robert St. John Hitchins, 22899, 2RAR on 15 July 2015
William B. James MC, 2905036, 1RAR on 16 Oct. 2015
Ronald Lewis Kirley 25686, 2RAR in early October 2015
Glimer John Lucas, 340105, 1RAR on 17 November 2015
Bartley Marley, 6320, 3RAR on 27 January 2016
Anthony B. Perriman, 26352, 1 RAR on 26 August 2015
John W. Rapkins, 31954, *HMAS Warramunga* on 14 June 2015

The Ode

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun, and in the morning
We will remember them.
LEST WE FORGET